

What is claimed is:

1. A method for providing television speech in a selected language comprising:
 - extracting closed caption data from a television signal, said closed caption data being representative of words; and
 - processing the extracted closed caption data in a speech synthesizer to provide said words as speech in a desired language.
2. A method in accordance with claim 1, comprising providing a user interface to enable a user to select one of a plurality of languages capable of being provided by said speech synthesizer.
3. A method in accordance with claim 2, wherein said user interface includes a television on-screen display.
4. A method in accordance with claim 3, wherein said user interacts with said on-screen display via a television remote control.
5. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said television signal includes an audio portion and a video portion, comprising the further step of muting said audio portion.
6. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said processing step converts said closed caption data to text, and then converts said text-to-speech.
7. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said closed caption data is representative of words in said desired language.

8. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said closed caption data is representative of words in a language that is different from the desired language, and said processing step translates said words into said desired language.

9. Apparatus for providing television speech in a selected language comprising:

a closed caption processor adapted to extract closed caption data from a television signal having an audio portion in a first language, said closed caption data being representative of words; and

a speech synthesizer adapted to convert the words represented by said closed caption data to speech in a second language.

10. Apparatus in accordance with claim 9, further comprising:

a user interface operatively associated with said speech synthesizer for enabling a user to select one of a plurality of different languages as said second language.

11. Apparatus in accordance with claim 10, wherein said user interface includes a television on-screen display.

12. Apparatus in accordance with claim 11, wherein said user interface further comprises a remote control for enabling said user to interact with said on-screen display.

13. Apparatus in accordance with claim 9, further comprising a mute circuit for muting an audio portion of said television signal when replacement speech is provided from said speech synthesizer.

14. Apparatus in accordance with claim 9, wherein said closed caption processor converts said closed caption data to text for processing into speech by said speech synthesizer.

15. Apparatus in accordance with claim 14, wherein said text is in said second language.

16. Apparatus in accordance with claim 14, wherein said text is in a language other than said second language, and said speech synthesizer is adapted to translate said text to said second language for processing into speech.

17. A software program for providing television speech in a selected language comprising:

a closed caption processor module adapted to extract closed caption data from a television signal having an audio portion in a first language, said closed caption data being representative of words; and

a speech synthesis module adapted to convert the words represented by said closed caption data to speech in a second language.

18. A software program in accordance with claim 17, further comprising a user interface module for enabling a user to select one of a plurality of different languages as said second language.

19. A software program in accordance with claim 18, wherein said user interface module includes software code for generating an on-screen display to enable said user to select said second language using a remote control.

20. A software program in accordance with claim 17, further comprising a mute module for actuating a mute circuit to mute an audio portion of said television signal when replacement speech is provided from said speech synthesis module.

21. A software program in accordance with claim 17, wherein said closed caption module converts said closed caption data to text for processing into speech by said speech synthesis module.

22. A software program in accordance with claim 21, wherein said text is in said second language.

23. A software program in accordance with claim 21, wherein said text is in a language other than said second language, and said speech synthesis module is adapted to translate said text to said second language for processing into speech.

24. A machine-readable media containing the software program of claim 17.

25. A method for providing audio from a television signal in a selected one of a plurality of different languages, said television signal including said audio in one of said languages, comprising:

allowing a user to select one of said languages; and

if the selected language is not the language included in said television signal, converting the language included in said television signal to the selected language for audio presentation to said user.

26. A method in accordance with claim 25, wherein the language is converted from text provided in a closed caption signal.

27. A method in accordance with claim 25, wherein the language is converted from the audio portion of said television signal.